

# Budapest Survival Guide

Dear OOoCon Community,

Hungary's capital, Budapest - a city consisting of Pest east of the Danube and Buda to the west - is home to Europe's largest synagogue, its largest thermal bath, and the third largest Parliament Building in the world. It is on the UNESCO World Heritage List for the cultural and architectural significance of the Danube Banks, the Buda Castle District, the Millennium Underground and Andrásy Avenue.

Here you will find some essential information about Hungary with helpful tips which we hope will be of use to you during the conference. Please take a look through it before your departure. For more detailed sightseeing information you may consult or download a guide published by the Tourist Office of Budapest, which is available in 19 languages [[http://bthflash.alfanet.hu/guide\\_2010/eng/index.html](http://bthflash.alfanet.hu/guide_2010/eng/index.html)]. On site we will also be distributing city guides with cultural listings.

We hope you will enjoy your time in Budapest!

OOoCon 2010 Organizing Committee

## content

### transit

Airport minibus service  
Taxi  
Public transport

### country info

Zone  
Electricity  
Communication  
Adversity  
Malaise  
Business  
Currency  
Idiosyncrasies  
Passports  
Tourinform

### word to the wise

Identification  
Tipping etiquette  
Site-seeing  
Volatile

### to see

The Jewish Quarter  
Ruin pubs  
Hackerspace

### to savor

### to indulge in

### to unwind

### Ir=lang\_hu

Pronunciation  
Vocabulary  
Online dictionary

### P contact

P

Disadvised

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## transit

### Airport Minibus Shuttle

The Airport Minibus is a rather convenient door-to-door shuttle service that will take you directly from the airport to your destination and vice versa. Book at the Airport Minibus Desk on the arrival level. The cost is 2,990 HUF/one way ticket (11 €/14 USD) per person.

NB: Airport-bound trips should be booked at least 24 hours in advance. To arrange transport to the airport: 1 296 8555

### Taxi

Taxi companies have fixed prices for Pest and Buda destinations, ranging from 4000-5000 HUF (14-18 EUR/18-23 USD). It is highly advisable to order a taxi by phone, since Tourist Taxi, the only taxi company allowed at the airport charges significantly more than other companies. Be sure to agree about the price in advance. **\*/It is preferable to call a taxi company rather than hail one on the street\*/**

Recommended taxi companies:

Fő Taxi: 36 1 222 2222

City Taxi: 36 1 211 1111

### Public Transport

Budapest has 3 metro lines: M1 (yellow), M2 (red) and M3 (blue). All 3 lines intersect in the heart of the city at *Deák tér*. Trains run every 2-5 minutes from 4:30 am to 23:10 pm. If you buy single tickets, make sure you validate them before your journey (inside the bus, trolleybus or tram and at metro entrances). You may purchase tickets at kiosks, inside metro stations or at automatic machines (the latter are not always dependable). One ticket costs 340 HUF. Tickets are only valid for one continuous journey on one form of transportation; in other words you need a new ticket for every transfer. Controllers will be wearing a blue armband and appear frequently during the summer months.

For a downloadable map of the Budapest transportation system go to [http://www.bkv.hu/en/downloadable\\_maps/downloadable\\_maps](http://www.bkv.hu/en/downloadable_maps/downloadable_maps)

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## country info

### Zone

Central European Time (daylight savings) = Greenwich Mean Time/UTC + 2 hours

### Electricity

If you are coming from outside of continental Europe you may need to bring a plug adapter and/or power converter with you. Electrical outlets in Hungary are European standard, Type C or F, with an electricity supply of 230 Volts and frequency of 50 Hz.



"Europlug" [Type C]



"Schuko" [Type F]

### Communication

International code for Hungary: 00 36

Area code for Budapest: 1

Inland inquiries: 198

International inquiries: 199

For international calls from Hungary dial "00" "country code" "city code"

## Adversity

: Ambulance: 104  
: Police: 107  
: Fire service: 105  
: Auto club assistance: 188

## Malaise

Pharmacy in Hungarian is *Gyógyszertár* or *Patika*. All-night pharmacies include Teréz Patika, Teréz körút 41 (VIth district) and Déli Gyógyszertár, Alkotás utca 1/B (XIIth district).

## Business

: 9 am - 4 pm (mon-thu); 9 am - 1 pm (fri); closed (sat-sun)

## Currency

The monetary unit is the Forint (HUF)

You are advised to exchange currency only at accredited places. The majority of banks have 24-hour ATMs, some of which will also exchange foreign currency. Individual banks and travel agencies are free to set their own rates (based on those advertised by the Hungarian National Bank) but they must be clearly displayed. It is advisable to keep records of currency exchange transactions. The rates offered at currency exchange offices are generally better than those available at banks, airport or hotels.

: 1 EUR = 280 HUF  
: 1 USD = 215 HUF

## Idiosyncrasies

The Hungarian system for measuring solids and liquids is based on *dekas* and *decis* (that is, 100 g and 100 ml increments). Wine and other beverages, for instance, are often priced by the *deci*; half a kilo of fruit would be 5 *dekas*.

: 100 g = 1 *deci* (**det**-see)  
: 0.1 litres = 1 *deka* (**deck**-ah)

## Post

Open Monday to Friday from 8 am - 6 pm. The closest post office to the Central European University is next to the Basilica (corner of *Szent István tér* and *Bajcsy-Zsilinszky utca*).

All post offices offer cashing facilities for VISA, VISA Electron, Eurocard/Mastercard and Maestro cards, as well as for Eurocheques, American Express traveler's cheques and postal orders.

## Passports

A lost or stolen passport should be reported to the tourist police headquarters at 2 Sütő u. in the Vth district, or the following (both offer round-the-clock service):

: Budapest and Pest County Directorate of the Office for Immigration and Citizenship, 60 Budafoki út 60.  
: Tel.: 1 463 9165; 1 463 9181

## Tourinform

The Hungarian National Tourist Offices' automatic information line provides a 24-hour service in English and German; information is related to tourism, accommodation, transportation and activities. (Personal questions addressed at the following number: +36 1 438 8080).

: From abroad: +36 30 303 0600  
: In Hungary: 06 80 630 800

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# word to the wise

## Identification

Hungarian law requires individuals to carry a photo ID with them at all times.

## Tipping etiquette

Tip taxi drivers and hotel and restaurant staff 10-15% (notwithstanding a service charge in the bill). It is also customary to tip porters, cloakroom attendants, bath or WC attendants, hairdressers, doctors and dentists.

## Sites

For those who wish to spend more time in the city, the Budapest Card is an option. It is valid for 48 and 72 hours and may be purchased at hotels and tourist centers. It offers unlimited travel on public transport, free or discounted entry to museums and reduced prices for tours and cultural programs. Go to <http://www.budapest-card.com/en/> for a list of partners.

### Jeopardous

Budapest is one of the safest cities in Europe. But some of the city's nightspots and striptease bars are not recommended due to highly effective scams. You may wish to check out the US Embassy's frequently updated blacklist page [[http://hungary.usembassy.gov/tourist\\_advisory.html](http://hungary.usembassy.gov/tourist_advisory.html)].

### Disadvised

Váci utca, aesthetically impoverished Puszta-style restaurants and folkloric tat

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## to see

### The Jewish Quarter

Locals have been fighting to protect the demolition of buildings in Budapest's former Jewish ghetto from international property developers who have been slapping up hideous residential buildings all over the historical 7<sup>th</sup> district. The streets are mostly filled with decaying masonry and crumbling facades but a closer look will reveal a number of architectural treasures, as well as a burgeoning alternative culture and night life (see below).

### Ruin pubs

Budapest has become renowned for its animated "ruin pubs" or *romkocsmák*. Their existence is not always evident from the streets; the pubs are tucked away in courtyards and abandoned buildings. They thrive particularly during the summer months, some of them offering a nice green oasis in the midst of the urban waste; [ruinpubs.com](http://ruinpubs.com) offers a description of each.

### Hackerspace

The Hungarian Autonomous Center for Knowledge (HACK) operates as a workshop, lab and office. User-maintained and operated, it is fully based on principles that come from the free software community. The center allows members to collaborate and share their knowledge and resources with one other. It is located in the 7<sup>th</sup> district above the popular "ruin pub" Fogasház. If you wish to visit send a message to [hack@hspb.org](mailto:hack@hspb.org) or phone 06 20 339 4219.

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## to savor

Typical Hungarian dishes tend to be slow-cooked meaty stews, characterized by liberal amounts of pork fat and heavily-dosed with paprika. The main meal of the day is usually eaten at mid-day, and Hungarians make it a many course affair, with soup an essential part of the meal. The most famous Hungarian specialty is goulash (*gulyás* in Hungarian), which is not a stew, as is commonly supposed, but a hearty soup made with beef and vegetables and a splash of paprika.

If you are dining as a group but wish to pay for your meal individually, just let the waiter know in advance. In restaurants the waiter will come to your table but you may have a problem getting their attention when it is time to settle the bill. In Hungary the waiter will not usually leave the bill with the customer but expect payment upon receipt of the bill.

Pub/Wine Bar	<i>Söröző/Borozó</i>
Restaurant	<i>Étterem/Vendéglő</i>
Self-service Restaurant	<i>Önkiszolgáló</i>
Pastry Shop	<i>Cukrázda</i>
Café	<i>Kávézó</i>

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## to indulge in

A regional specialty, *pálinka* - a brandy made from plums (*szilva*), cherries (*meggy*) or apricots (*barack*) - is popular, as is *Unicum*, an aperitif made from bitter herbs. Hungary is also known for its wine. While there are many fine wines in Hungary, there are also many cheap and barely drinkable ones. Use discretion and beware of the sweet red wines. Legends and anecdotes sing the praises of the world famous *Tokay*, a dessert wine which is only produced in Hungary and which derives its distinct character from the grapes being allowed to rot on the vine. *Tokay*, which sells for high prices elsewhere, is a good bargain in Hungary. It is the only wine ever to receive a 100% grade from Wine Spectator Magazine. **\*highly recommended\***

Budapest has a *mitteleuropa* coffeehouse tradition that dates back to the mid-nineteenth century. You also might want to enjoy a pastry in one of the city's cake shops: Ruszwurm in the castle district or August or Gerbaud in the Vth district offer first class confection.

*Lángos*, or fried dough, is another "Hungaricum" */\*better than it sounds\*/*. You can find it on the second level of the Central Market Hall or *Nagycsarnok*.

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## to unwind

Under the surface of Budapest lies Europe's largest urban reserves of geothermal springs. Budapesters know the value of the baths for stress relief and most visit them regularly, maintaining a bathing culture that has flourished since Roman times. */\*bring flip flops, a towel and a bathing cap\*/*

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## lr=lang\_hu

Hungarian belongs to the Finno-Ugric family of languages. While a good number of words have been borrowed over the centuries from Slavic, German, Latin and Turkish, the language falls outside of the Indo-European language group and therefore its pronunciation may be difficult for the uninitiated (but not impenetrable and often worth the effort).

NB: R's are rolled and it is always the first syllable of the word that is stressed.

### Pronunciation

a = short open o (as in <b>software</b> )	ö = short o (as in <b>network</b> )
á = long a (as in <b>crackz</b> )	ő = long o (as in <b>further</b> )
c = ts (as in <b>exploitz</b> )	s = sh (as in <b>cache</b> )
cs = ch (as in <b>cheque</b> )	sz = s (as in <b>FLOSS</b> )
e = short e (as in <b>bet</b> )	ty = close to ch (but pronounced like the t in <b>tulip</b> )
é = long e (as in <b>software</b> )	u = short u (as in <b>butter</b> )
gy = (as in French <b>adieu</b> )	ú = long u (as in <b>neutrality</b> )
i = short i (as in <b>innovation</b> )	ü = short u (as in the French <b>tu</b> )
í = long i (as in <b>free</b> )	ű = long u (as in the French <b>tu</b> , but extended)
ly = sound of a voiced y (as in <b>yahoo</b> )	v = v (as in <b>very</b> )
ny = gn (as in <b>cognac</b> )	z = z (as in <b>buzz</b> )
o = short o (as in <b>port</b> )	zs = voiced like the French j (as in <b>casual</b> )
ó = long o (as in <b>oh</b> )	

## Vocabulary

Hello or Goodbye (to one person)	Szia ( <b>see</b> -ya)
Hello or Goodbye (to more than one person)	Sziasztok ( <b>see</b> -ya-stoke)
Yes/No	Igen/Nem ( <b>ee</b> -gen/nem)
OK/Good	Rendben/Jó ( <b>rend</b> -ben/yo)
Thank you	Köszönöm ( <b>kuh</b> -suh-nuhm)
Good morning	Jó reggelt (yo <b>reg</b> -gelt)
Good afternoon (and polite greeting)	Jó napot (yo <b>nawp</b> -oat)
Good evening	Jó estét (yo <b>esh</b> -tate)
Good night	Jó éjszakát (yo <b>ace</b> -a-cat)
Please	Kérem ( <b>care</b> -em)
You're welcome	Szívesen ( <b>see</b> -veh-shen)
Goodbye	Viszontlátásra (formal) ( <b>veece</b> -ohnt-latt-ash-ra) Szia/Sziasztok(informal) ( <b>see</b> -yuh/ <b>see</b> -yuh-stoke)
Cheers!	Egészségedre! ( <b>egace</b> -sheged-re)
Sorry!/ Excuse me!	To apologize: Bocsánat! ( <b>boatch</b> -a-not) To get someone's attention: Elnézést! ( <b>el</b> -nay-zaysht)
Do you speak English/German?	Beszél angolul/németül? ( <b>bess</b> -ale <b>ong</b> -gole-lool/naim-et-ool)
I don't speak Hungarian.	Nem beszélek magyarul (nem <b>bess</b> -ale-ekk <b>maud</b> -jar-ool)
I don't understand.	Nem értem (nem <b>air</b> -tem)
I would like to pay.	Fizetni szeretnék ( <b>feez</b> -etni <b>sair</b> -et-nake)
Where are the toilets?	Hol van a WC? (hole von ah <b>vae</b> -tsay)
I would like two tickets.	Két jegyet kérek ( <b>kate</b> yedge-et <b>care</b> -ek)
I would like ... (object)	Kérek ( <b>care</b> -ek)
There is none.	Nincs ( <b>neench</b> )
Impossible	Nem lehet/lehetetlen (nem <b>lehet</b> / <b>lehet</b> -et-len)
<b>MEN/ WOMEN</b>	<b>FÉRFI/ NŐ</b>
<b>ENTRANCE/ EXIT</b>	<b>BEJÁRAT/ KIJÁRAT</b>
<b>OPEN/ CLOSED</b>	<b>NYITVA/ ZÁRVA</b>
<b>PULL/ PUSH</b>	<b>HÚZNI/ TOLNI</b>

## Dictionary

<http://dict.sztaki.hu/english-hungarian>

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## Contact

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Feel free to contact us if you have questions or encounter difficulties during the  
conference

Zoltán Csetényi, Event Coordinator  
: e-mail: [csetenyi.zoltan@openskm.com](mailto:csetenyi.zoltan@openskm.com)  
: mobile tel: 36 70 455 0680

Peter Szakál, Conference Manager  
: e-mail: [szakal.peter@openskm.com](mailto:szakal.peter@openskm.com)  
: mobile tel: 36 70 704 5669